

HEPATITIS

Arizona Department of Corrections
Health Service Bureau

Inmate Wellness Program
HEP 1013- 01/06

Hepatitis is an inflammatory condition of the liver. The liver is the largest organ in our body and one of the most complex. It has more than 500 functions, including:

- Filtering poisonous materials from the body
- Manufacturing hemoglobin for use of its vital iron content
- Producing bile to aid in the digestion of fat

- Stores vitamins, minerals and sugars for future energy.

Since the liver is such an important organ with so many functions, diseases of the liver can have serious consequences.

There are several kinds of hepatitis, and each type is labeled by a letter. Hepatitis A, B, and C are the most common

Types of Hepatitis	Examples	Preventing Hepatitis
Hepatitis A is spread by direct contact or indirect contact with feces.	You can get hepatitis A by eating contaminated raw or undercooked food items, drinking contaminated water and through sexual activity, particularly oral-anal contact (rimming).	Make sure all food is cooked completely, avoid oral-anal contact, and wash your hands after using the bathroom.
Hepatitis B is spread through direct contact with human blood or body fluids (saliva or semen) infected with hepatitis B. Hepatitis B disease may lead to cirrhosis of the liver or liver cancer.	This may happen when sharing needles, having sex with a person who is infected, receiving a tattoo from improperly cleansed equipment	Avoid using illegal intravenous drugs and NEVER share needles. Avoid tattoos and sharing of personal hygiene equipment. Use condoms during sexual activity once you are out of prison.
Hepatitis C was previously known as Non A Non B type. It is more common in I.V. drug users.	This can happen when sharing needles (syringes), receiving tattoos from improperly cleansed equipment, and by sharing personal hygiene such as shaving razors and toothbrushes. It is also spread through body fluids including sexual contact.	Avoid using illegal intravenous drugs and never share needles. Avoid tattoos and sharing of personal hygiene equipment. Use condoms during sexual activity once you are out of prison.

Symptoms

All types of hepatitis have similar symptoms including: mild, flu-like symptoms, loss of appetite, nausea/vomiting, fever, weakness/tiredness (lasts weeks or months), abdominal pain, dark urine, yellow or tan bowel movements and yellowing of the skin and/or eyes.

If you develop symptoms, report them to your Health Care Professional **immediately**. Usually, symptoms will subside within one or two weeks, but it is important to rest, maintain a properly balanced diet, and avoid high doses of vitamin supplements that contain iron, Vitamin A or Vitamin D while your body is recovering in

order to prevent a relapse or other serious progression of liver disease.

Treatment

There is no treatment for Hepatitis A. People exposed to Hepatitis A may qualify for preventive treatment. Hepatitis B treatment depends on the severity of the disease and if the patient meets selection criteria. Hepatitis C often leads to cirrhosis of the liver or chronic hepatitis that slowly progresses to liver disease and eventually death. As you can see, it is best to not get this disease.